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Ministerial Almanack :

ADDRESSED TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD THURLOW,
Late LORD CHANCELLOR of ENGLAND.

In which is set forth, and clearly explained,
The Nature and Value of every Sort of PATRONAGE
now about to be transferred from the EAST INDIA
COMPANY to the Crown. Very necessary to be
kept at hand as well by those who support, as those
who oppose, the two Bills now depending in the
House of Commons, to regulate India Affairs.

By RECOS JEPPI,
Of DUKE'S-PLACE, Gent.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. STOCKDALE opposite Burlington House,
Piccadilly.

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Eight Honorable

Lord E. W. O. W.

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Volume of every sort of law
the country. Very necessary to be
as well by those who support as by
the law. It is now depending in the
unions to regulate India Affairs.

ECOS JEPH

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A
MINISTERIAL ALMANACK.

MY LORD,

THOUGH this little book is addressed to your Lordship, the writer hopes that it will be seriously read, and its contents duly weighed by every peer and commoner in the kingdom.—Our possessions in the East have been, and are, justly considered as the last important stake of the nation ; it is for this stake, that a party of desperate men are now playing ; and it is wonderful to observe the supineness of almost all orders of the people, whilst this daring attempt is making, which, if it succeeds,

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will most certainly, in its consequences, destroy the ballance of our most excellent constitution.

It is now almost three years since, committees were formed from the House of Commons, to investigate the affairs of the East India Company; and the nation has been put to an immense expence, to have extracts from the old manuscript records at the India House, printed for the information of the members of the House of Commons. Much pains have been taken by the friends of Governor General Hastings, to shew that the extracts have been partially made; and the inferences drawn therefrom, uncandid, illiberal and unjust, as far as they relate to the publick and private character of that gentleman, and they have succeeded with all impartial men; insomuch, that when Mr. Fox, in his speech on the 18th of November, preparative to the introduction of his most extraordinary motions, attempted to revive the stale personal abuse
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of that gentleman, the house was mute as fishes—no hear him ! hear him ! reverberated from the walls and benches. On his mention of the ninth report, a fit of coughing seized him. He had licked up the filthy phlegm of the composer, but he could not swallow it. Given up, as he may be to his ambition, he is not yet so lost to all sense of feeling, as to adopt, with ease, the lies of others for his own, and naturalise them by his eloquence. They stuck in his throat ; some marks of grace remained ; and he blundered over that part of his harangue in a manner that pained every real friend that he had in the house—he staggered on the floor, as unable to bear up under the weight imposed on him by the malicious and vindictive orator, and the prostituted and abandoned Asiatic general. He was in the situation of Cæsar, who though he wished success to the destructive plans of Catiline, was yet afraid of shame, and hoped no more from the successes of his villainous associate, than like a thief at a fire, to snatch
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some fragments of the spoils from the great ruin, thereby to be brought on the liberties of his country.

The modern attempt, my Lord, is not more extraordinary than the antient one. Great Britain, I fear, is so far on the decline, as to give countenance and hopes of success to the attempts of the most desperate political adventurers. I apprehend great danger from the resolution and abilities of Mr. Fox; but he has, I think, put too much to risque in the present business. He seems not to be aware of the difficulty of carrying into execution the intended plans of the chairman of the select committee, and the compiler of the ninth report; at best, that performance is but an elegant party pamphlet. Such a production might have raised its author into ministerial notice, had it been the first or second essay of his political abilities; but as the work of a full grown statesman, I believe, it is rather considered as the last effort of a des-

perate patriot, whose mask of virtue has recently been torn away.

How Mr. Secretary Fox could have been induced to introduce his motions by so vague a declamation, is to me surprising. He must have known, that every man who heard him, had seen a complete refutation of his arguments on the Rhello and Marratta war, as well as a vindication of the suppression of Cheit Sing's rebellion. The treatment of the Big-hams, and an explanation of the appointments of Bristow and Fowke, and of the opium contract. But to be on his feet two hours and ten minutes, saying something was necessary to hood-wink the publick; and the commentator and refiner, Woodfall, executed his part admirably in the Morning Chronicle the following day. The honourable Secretary declared, that it was the general opinion that a change of system in the Asiatic department, was necessary. To support this opinion, he produces an account of
what

what he affirmed to be the real state of the Company's affairs, in which a balance appeared against them of eight millions sterling. This assertion is gone out into every corner of the land, accompanied by another very popular assertion, viz. that the Company's servants, in India, by rapacity and speculation, had been the cause of all this ruin to their employers. It is known to you, my Lord, and your brother peers, how much the million are governed by bold assertion; they never require sound argument, and this the honourable Secretary very well knows. But there was certainly very great timidity in Mr. Fox's affirming this in the House of Commons, in particular, as Sir Henry Fletcher was present, who, as chairman of the court of directors, at the close of the last sessions of parliament, prayed the house to grant permission to the company to borrow 500,000*l.* to supply their present exigencies; not, as he said, that the company was by any means in a state of bankruptcy, for they had then, in ex-
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pectation, to receive goods already provided
 and paid for in India to the amount of
 11,000,000 sterling, and fifty nine ships
 were now abroad to bring it home. This
 vast sum Mr. Fox did not give the company
 credit for in his very loose and inaccurate
 statement to the house. Which of these
 two mens account of the state of the com-
 pany's affairs are in the right? They cannot
 both be so. Did Sir Henry Fletcher de-
 lude the house into a loan of credit, to
 support a bankrupt company, and then,
 from that very money divide eight per
 cent. on their capital amongst the propri-
 etors, assuring them, that the state of
 their affairs was such, that the directors
 were justified in so doing? Indeed, my
 Lord, the whole of the speech labours
 under difficulties of the same nature.
 But what are we to think of a minister
 who, in one breath thanks God that the
 influence of the crown has been much re-
 duced; and in the next, proposes mea-
 sures, which, if carried into execution,
 will furnish the means of corruption in a
 greater

greater degree, ten times told, than any minister of this country hath ever yet possessed. I pledge myself, my Lord, to prove, that this will be the case, if Mr. Fox's proposed bills are passed by the legislature into laws.

I am no lawyer, and therefore shall not touch the grand question of right, whether when a great commercial company have paid 400,000 pounds to the state, for an exclusive privilege of trade for ten years to come----the legislative power justly can, and without assigning any cause, but that of the meer will of the minister of the day, resume that grant or charter, at the expiration of three years of the time.---But such is the matter in debate; and I own that I think the decision is of vast importance, not only to all corporate bodies, but to every individual in this hitherto free country.---The nation have been long amused with the reports of the two committees; in particular, those of the select committee, in which a vast mass of abuse
has,

has, in various modes, been heaped on the head of one man. No direct charges have been made, or any shadow of proof produced against him; to have him removed from his station to make way for others, was all that was at first intended; but that not being easily to be effected, it has been determined to destroy the system, in order to get away the man. It is therefore, my Lord, no longer a dispute, whether Mr. Hastings has been a good or bad governor-general of Bengall?---“ You have accused me wrongfully, do me justice, or send me a successor, for I find that I am become a burthen to the service, and am ready to resign it;” is the language Mr. Hastings has held to the court of directors.---No, say the ministry, that will not do; we will first change the whole system of the company, and then relieve the governor-general from his office at our leisure.---On this the ministry have rested their cause, and most certainly the friends of the governor-general will do well to join issue.---Mr. Fox himself, in

his speech, more than once insinuates, that it is the general system that he strikes at, and not at this or that particular man.--- So that, in my opinion, though Messrs. Burke and Smith were to rave through this whole session, as they did through the last, on the supposed delinquency of Mr. Hastings, his friends should treat it with that silent contempt that the present well known characters of those famous orators deserve.

A change of system in the conduct of our Asiatic affairs, is now the plea, my Lord; and, if it succeeds in the full manner proposed by the honourable Secretary, it will give such an additional influence to the crown, as in its consequences to destroy the ballance of our constitution. I shall first shew that this will really be the case, by bringing, as concisely as I can into one point of view, the patronage to be taken from the East India Company, and given to the ministry.

An

An honourable member affirmed, that the commissioners proposed to be elected by ballot, to conduct our Asiatic affairs, would be *the minister's commissioners*----I quote from Woodfall---and he is now one of the great ministerial speaking trumpets. The King in his speech is made to say, that the fruit of the long labour of the committees, *will be expected*; nor is it indecent or indelicate to say, that the nomination of the fifteen new directors, or commissioners, must be considered as the first crop. Though a self-denying ordinance was to take place, and no member of either House was to be allowed to become a commissioner, yet I am justified, from parts of Mr. Fox's speech (I quote from Woodfall) in saying, that the commissioners are intended to be under the controul of the ministry for the time being. Mr. Fox, with all his boasted candour, did not speak out, but he faintly insinuated, that the parties of the nation were so equally divided, that no minister could expect to be long lived, as things at present stood.

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The fact is notorious. There is not sufficient provender left, to feed and make steady, the wavering members at the chapel. Thank God, the influence of the crown has decreased; but, by G--d, it must again be encreased, or we are but the ministers of the day. There is but one quarter from whence this necessary patronage can be taken, and that is from the East India Company. Why then should we boggle, or do things by halves, if by a law we can transfer this influence at once from the east to the west end of the town, from the court of directors, to the King's ministers, the business will be compleatly effected; after which we shall have a permanent and fixed majority, and the business of the sessions will go smoothly on. The measure is a bold and daring one, and the prize in view worthy the contest; but the honourable Secretary should have stood on his own bottom, and trusted more to his own strength; the introductory abuse of Governor General Hastings was ill timed, and contrary to the Secretary's own declared

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ed reasons for changing the system. That which was a lie, when spoken by Cicero, or Craſſus, could not become truth, from having been adopted by Cato. The Houſe is not only tired, but diſgusted, with the falacious whimsies of the compiler of the ninth report; and the Aſiatic General's credit is as low at St. Stephen's as at Brook's. They are but rotten reeds, and not fit props, for the Man of the People to lean upon. Notwithſtanding this, there is a great ſagacity in the formation of the general plan; it ſeems with the genius of our all-accomplished Secretary. The great object is carefully kept out of ſight. The matter brought forward to debate is ſimply, whether the Eaſt India Company's affairs can be better managed by twenty-four directors of the proprietors chooſing, or by fifteen commiſſioners elected by Parliament, and approved and continued by the crown? What their oſtenſible emolument is to be, does not yet appear; it will be found in the bills, and as I propoſe to conſider that bill, or bills, paragraph by paragraph, I ſhall paſs it

it by here. That the fifteen commissioners will be the minister's commissioners, is not doubted, nor I think denied; and whether members of the House, or not, they will always cause a division of at least twenty votes at the chapel on the side of their creator; and this, though a very moderate calculation, amply supplies the vacancies caused by the suppression of the Board of Trade, and the contractors bill.

But, my Lord, the secreted influence which this scheme will furnish, if carried into execution, is prodigious, and to the constitution dangerous in the extreme. Much information will arise in the course of the debates in the lower House, to direct the judgement of the upper one; but much more will be hidden. All the dreaded influence, which the crown possessed in 1774, before the dismembering of the empire, was but a trifle in comparison of what the honourable Secretary now aims at. He does not, my Lord, know the half of

of it himself. And I think that he has done very wrong, in committing so wantonly the credit of that man, who has, by the means of the Duke of Portland, supplied him with the information he does possess. I mean Sir Henry Fletcher---if the Secretary's statement of the Company's affairs is true, Sir Henry Fletcher's, to the court of proprietors, must be false. And this, let me tell him, is no very agreeable situation to reduce any man to. I say nothing of the other thirteen compliant directors, whose conduct has furnished the Secretary with his best argument, for depriving their constituents, the proprietors, of their lately purchased chartered rights. Poor devils, how queer they looked, when they first heard, that they were to be crammed one into another like China boxes, and from thirteen reduced to eight; and how much more will they be surprised when, in the bill five only of those eight will be left standing; but they meet their deserts. To love the treason and hate the traitors, is an old ministerial adage—and I yet think
so

so favourably of our Secretary's detestation of wretches who betray their trust, as to believe that, if it shall be thought necessary to retain any of the old directors in the service of the company, he will rather select them from amongst those who supported the rights of the proprietors, than the prostitute number, who gave those rights up a prey to ministerial avidity.

I do suppose, my Lord, that Mr. Fox, by risking all on this one point, is pretty well assured, that his bills will pass into laws.—I shall, before I consider the bills themselves, shew you what that patronage is, which is thus intended to be transferred to the ministry.

Mr. Secretary Fox, in his speech, said, that he avoided the mention of names, and for very obvious reasons; very obvious indeed! I believe that the House would not bear to hear the names of certain committee-men mentioned, as proper persons to succeed to offices, which they
had

had left all shame behind, in causing to become vacant.

My Lord, be the commissioners whom they may, if they were not to be made subject to the controul of the crown, the plan would be imperfect. This my Lord North found to be the defect in his bill of 1773; the six annual rotation directors, did but barely secure him a majority in the Court of Directors; for he could not always influence the Court of Proprietors to return the whole six, who went out by rotation the preceeding year. Sometimes the ministers themselves pulled different ways; and it often happened, that a man's private character was so good in the city, (for instance Mr. Bensley) that he became a director in defiance of ministerial influence; this was owing to the timidity of the noble Lord in the blue ribband. He wanted the patronage of the company, without the responsibility. His colleague is a bolder man. He dares to grasp at

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both. Trust me, says he, with the chartered rights of the company but for five, or even for three years, and if I do not manage it better than it has been hitherto managed, why then take it back again. This language is held by a man who reprobated every measure of Lord North, until a third of the empire was lost; and now, instead of impeaching, has submitted to be yoked with him in a measure that, if any thing can, will lose us another third. But that is not the worst we have to apprehend from the Secretary's plan. If he meant what he said, when he voted, that the influence of the crown had encreased, was encreasing, and ought to be diminished; how is it possible that he can reconcile such doctrine with his present system, which I shall prove will bring more influence and power into the hands of ministers; than all which has been lost in America, the West Indies, and struck out of the House of Commons by Mr. Burke's reform

reform bill, the contractor's bill, &c. &c. four times told.

The commissioners once nominated, and the bills passed into laws, the acquired influence will begin to operate. I do not think so badly of Mr. Fox himself, as to imagine that he will instantly tear to pieces the old system, to gratify his craving friends---some of them must expect to be treated as the directors have been treated, squeezed together in a small space ; for it will then be as much too late for them to complain, as it is now for the honest thirteen directors. Where a minister has in view so much to give away, he need not be sparing of his promises. It was not a bad stroke, the putting an advertisement into the Morning Chronicle, offering a 1000 guineas for a writer-ship in the Company's service, just at the moment when the Secretary's friends all knew the system was going to be changed, and the patronage transferred—it set the Israelites to work, as including a question in the Rule of
Three,

Three. If to become a five years 'prentice boy in India, is worth a thousand guineas; what is a factor-ship, a junior merchant-ship, a senior merchant-ship, a seat at the Board of Trade, a member of the supreme council, or even a government, worth?---Cunning Little Isaac!---how well timed was the offer made for the lowest station in the Company's service in particular, when it is well known, that to oblige ministers, the directors have, since the year 1774, permitted scandalous innovations to take place in their service, in every station, from a governor down to the rank of factor!---though Mr. Fox is well versed in the Doctrine of precedents, I will not suppose, that he will avail himself of doing more than he ought, because more than in justice ought has already been done. Regular rotation may be maintained in every line of service and department in India, and yet patronage enough be left to enable a minister of this country, to command such a majority in the

the House of Commons that nothing could resist,

The English patronage of the East is like the fruits of the Earth, annual; and, I hope, like them, will prove eternal. It is of a nature different from all other patronage, permanent and durable, subject to encrease in times of war, but not much to diminish in times of peace. It will supply such means of pecuniary gratification, of which to this moment neither your Lordship or any member of your House has the most distant idea. If the present plan succeeds in its full extent, it must ultimately become the great gulph, in which the liberties of this country will be for ever lost. The Secretary himself has not yet grasped in his very capacious mind, the vastness of the power; which his bill will confer on the minister of the day. My Lord, I have viewed the scene from our first acquisition of territory, and, at all times, until this plan appeared, have considered it as an acquisition

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tion, that might prove highly beneficial to my country. The Secretary himself has shewn that it is, mercantally considered, honestly worth to this nation, two millions a year, in customs, excise, dividends on stock, and freight on ships. Let him beware, that he does not destroy the fowl, to come at the golden egg. If the people intrust him with the disposal of such prodigious patronage, he should at least keep his word with them in one single instance, and give them so much of their natural and legal privileges as are included in a triennial Parliament; and he may then do it with safety; for I will presently shew, that the golden fruit of the East (hinted at in the speech) will collect dragons enough round him to guard it.

The Commissioners, will at first, sit like an Eastern Divan, mute and silent as death, until the spirit of the Sultan, in the shape of the Visier or Premier, comes to move them to action. To avoid offence I declare, that by the appellation, *Premier*

mier, I do not mean the Duke of Portland---no his Grace only covers with his name, the ambition of a man, who “bears, like the Turk, no brother near the Throne.” The first victim to the Commissioners power will, probably, be the Governor General of Bengal.---The holding an office, to which is annexed a salary of twenty five thousand pounds a year, in defiance of all the *lies* in all the *reports*, is an offence which the philanthropy of Mr. Burke, would find it hard to forgive.---He must away; and yet, as it does not appear that he is related to, or connected with, a single member in the house, who will divide against them. It might be policy and save appearances; to let him come away easily--but they cannot trust him--- his office, including that of his civil and military secretary, and *aids du camp*, is worth four votes in the chappel.

Sir Eyre Coote is said to be dead, so that a commander of the Bengal army, includ-

including his staff, may be estimated at three votes ; for there are, at least forty members, who would gladly accept the Hundreds and supply a proper Successor in the House, only to go out Secretary to the Commander in Chief. At Bengal Mr. Wheeler, the present second in the Council General is not known to ministry, and besides has proved an opostate to the principles of Mr. Francis, the Secretary's friend ; his place is worth two votes ; as for Messrs. M'Pherson and Stables, the two last in the Council General, it is impossible to consider their stations in any other light than as reversioners, value one vote each ; for their patron, Lord North, cannot yet give them up. To recall them on a plea of inexperience, and send men quite ignorant in Asiatic affairs, in their room, will be too barefaced. As to the Chief Justiceship, a recal to answer charges not yet framed, Sir Elijah Impey considers as a very different thing to that of being removed in a legal way from his office, and having a successor appointed ; however,

ever, a vacancy in the Supreme Court most likely will happen from his recal, and I shall set down a puisne judge's seat, in the Supreme Court, at a single vote.

I do not immediately recollect any other vacancies in the higher offices in Asia, for as the Company have, from amongst their old servants at Bombay, appointed a successor to Governor Hornby, I cannot think that the minister will proceed with such violence as to set him aside, though they may, and I suppose will, limit him to a time, short of the duration of the act itself, which, we are told, will be for three, or, at most five years.

I shall now recapitulate what I call the influence which is to be created, or transferred, with the act itself, from the Court of Directors to the King's Ministers.

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Seven

Seven Commissioners for India affairs, with promised reversion, value in chapel votes	10
Governor General of Bengal, with his household	4
Commander in Chief, if, as General Clavering was appointed to succeed to the government	3
Mr. Wheeler's vacancy - - -	2
Reversion of M'Pherson and Stable's stations	2
A Secretary to the Council General, better in point of emolument, than the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland - - -	1
The vacant seat on the law bench -	1

Votes 23

The other kinds of patronage which will follow of course, I shall divide into three heads, under the denomination of annual patronage, contingent patronage, and pecuniary patronage.

I have not so bad an opinion of any set of ministers as to suppose, that they would wantonly cut down the tree for the fruit it now bears, regardless of what it might bear in future if left standing;--- and on that principle I am obliged to believe, that when Mr. Fox, or any other minister, declares that they will change the whole system of Asiatic management for the good of the proprietors, and of the

the nation at large, they mean no more than that they will have the whole patronage of the East in their own hands ; and by the whole patronage, they mean the common patronage now enjoyed by the Directors of the East India Company at home, and their servants abroad.---

The fair annual patronage arises from the appointment of writers in the civil service, cadets in the military and marine, and surgeons and chaplains to all their settlements, and to all their armies.--- There is but one way of estimating fairly what the demands of the service annually are ; for to supply a regular succession in all those orders of men, it is a very general and received opinion, that, take what period of time you please to count over the number of Europeans of all denominations then alive in every part of India, a number of Europeans equal thereto, will die off in the following sixteen years ; though some orders of men, such as common sailors, and common soldiers, suffer

more than others, may be true, it does not alter or invalidate the matter of fact. I am in quest of some probable criterion, from which to draw a reasonable conclusion, and by no means asserting, that every man who goes to India, must die in the course of sixteen years ; though it may appear, from the above supposition, to come round to his turn to die in that period. Indeed, I much fear that the muster rolls in the company's military line, and in the King's ships, do much exceed this estimation ; but some few of every order live to return, and they make vacancies, as well as those who die off ; I shall therefore, take the numbers as they now stand in the Companys printed lists, of the several orders, as far as they go, and substitute guess numbers, where printed vouched ones fail me, and from that criterion, state the probable annual patronage, which will accrue to the ministry by the proposed bills passing into laws.

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The latest list of the company's civil servants, at their four presidencies in India, including their settlement at St. Helena, and factory at China, which I have seen make the covenanted servants, and Clergymen (each of whom, for decency sake, I shall value equal to a writer) in number 734. but, as some of these are at home, though, this year all ordered back to India, I shall state the civil servants actually abroad at 700.--Now, my Lord, if you will but look at Major Rennell's excellent map of Hindostan, you will find, that considering the national, civil, political, and commercial concerns, in the very extensive and rich provinces they now possess in that part of the world, you will not deem 700 men too few ; that the ministry will, by degrees, increase them, I have not a doubt, and perhaps it may, in time, be prudent so to do ; but I shall draw my estimate from what is now the real matter of fact.—There are now actually employed seven hundred civil servants in the East India Company's several settlements abroad

abroad, including about twelve clergymen,---which requires an annual supply of about forty four young servants, or writers, to keep them up to that necessary number;---that each of those appointments are seperately worth a thousand guineas, is what I will not affirm, but I believe I risk nothing in saying, that if the appointments were arranged in the following manner; fifteen for Bengal, twelve for Madaras, eight for Bombay, five for Bencoolen, two for China, and two for St. Helena, and all thrown into an urn together, I am convinced that the best families in the kingdom would give five hundred guineas for a chance of obtaining one of the best appointments, and a certainty of some appointment in the Company's service for one of their younger sons. To drop the idea of money being openly given for an appointment, my Lord, and advert to the influence such annual patronage would create in a certain assembly, your Lordshp's knowledge of the human heart is sufficient to induce
you

you to join in opinion with me, when I say, that it would serve the purpose of keeping steady forty-four other votes to the minister's purpose, in a certain house.

I must lump the sea and land officers, the surgeons and cadets, in one body, as I did the civilians and clergy; of those four orders, I am well assured, that the Company have now in their pay abroad, at their several settlements, about two thousand one hundred of all ranks. On the above principle of calculation, it will require about 132 annual recruits, to keep the number intire. Now, my Lord, if four of these last are but equal to one writer, and put them up to sale in the same way, and, my word for it, they sell as well. It follows of course, that 132 of those inferior appointments every year, will secure about three and thirty votes in the same place.

We live, my Lord, in an age so refined, and so ambitious, that the meanest shop-

shop-keepers are desirous of breeding their sons up gentlemen. Now all the above mentioned surgeons, officers, and cadets, commence gentlemen on their arrival in India; and if they live to return, take rank as Nabobs. There is not a mechanic in the kingdom, that would not risque a bankruptcy, to raise one hundred and twenty five pounds to buy his son a ticket in this great lottery; and such is the rage for going to India, that if Mr. Fox was the patriot, which he pretends to be, the instant he got hold on the patronage of the East, he would put every scrap of it up to sale, to raise a fund for paying off the national debt; and I will soon convince you what a noble fund it would create.

The Company employs ninety sail of noble ships, in their trade from Europe to Asia. Their contracts for military stores of all sorts, as well as iron, lead, copper, broad cloth, and other woollens, are very considerable. There is yet no law,

Law, forbidding a contractor to the East India Company to sit in the house; and though an officer may have served them twenty years, he must raise five thousand guineas, or he cannot have a ship in the service. To this vast mass of influence, do but add the warehouse-keepers, and clerks places, the number of pensioners and sine-curial offices dependant on such a commercial body, who export and import annually, property to the full amount of their original capital, 3,200,000*l.* or they could not exist. I say, my Lord, run over in your mind the prodigious weight of influence such a mass of patronage will throw into the ministerial scale, and then tell me, if too much power in the hands of the Crown is dangerous to the constitution, how long after Mr. Secretary Fox's bills shall become laws, shall we be safe?

I begin, my Lord, to be tired of estimating how many votes, the Asiatic patronage may be employed to secure; and, if Sir Robert Walpole was right when he

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said

said, that every man had his price, Englishmen may live to exclaim—"a curse on both your Houses!"

After valuing the commercial, or home patronage, above mentioned, at twenty Lords or Commons (no matter which) I shall proceed to the contingent; but as I said before, that I hope the service abroad, in particular the mercantile, will not be ruined by too much innovation, or super-seeding, the younger servants will be permitted to rise in their turn, to the head of the list under council, a seat at the Council Board, I fear, will be lost to them forever, except they chance to be the sons or nephews of powerful senators. At Bengal, there is a governor and four council—at Madras, a governor and nine council—at Bombay, a governor and ten council—at Bencoolen, a governor and eight council—and at each place a commander in chief. The president and members of the Board of Trade at Bengal, are eleven in number, and may, for emolument, rank with

with counsellors. The governor, and deputy governor of St. Helena, and the three first Supercargoes at China; the chief justice at Bengal, and his three brethren, with the company's solicitor, may all be said to hold offices at will, very well worth the while of a member of Parliament to promise the minister implicate obedience, in order to obtain any one of them for a brother, son, or nephew.

If the stations of the above sixty superior servants of the company in Asia, is left at the disposal of the commissioners, how many assenting voices will not the reversions of them procure the minister? I maintain it, that the whole transmarine patronage of the crown, does not equal in emolument the pecuniary advantages of any ten of them; and as to solid annual salary, the four governours of the presidences in India; the four seconds or deputy governor's, and the four commanders of the several armies, receive more than all the King's governors abroad and at home, from the Lord Lieutenant
of

of Ireland, down to the most pitiful finicure government of the most decayed ruin, called a castle, in England. The above, my Lord, is but part of the contingent patronage; there is much more. Indeed it is so valuable, and so extensive, that it would require more room, to innumerate it than I have to spare; of a part of this patronage, the greedy directors robbed their servants abroad; and the ministry, after having robbed the directors of their fidelity first, and their patronage afterwards, will plead precedent, and draw benefit from their own wrong. The chiefship of Surat, of Masulapatnam, Negapatnam, Vizacapatnam; the Presidency at Oud, at Benaras, at the Durbar, at the Maharatta Court of Poonah, at the Nizam's Court in the Decan—are all rich stations; and to obtain the disposal of one of them, well worth a monosyllable, though a right honourable senator was to say yea or nay, at the will of the minister for seven years together----Commissary-ships, paymaster-ships, and general store-keepers places

places, in India, have, before now, some of them been filled by members of Parliament; and when they come to market, as come to market they will, if the Secretary's bills become laws, they will each of them fetch a better price, than the two best rotten Boroughs in England. So you see, my Lord, a species of merchandize will be created not yet against law. A father's monofylable in England, may be worth three thousand a year to his son in India; and I have mentioned no species of contingent patronage yet, that is not worth double the sum, annually. A comfortable way of providing for the younger branches of a great family !!!

To secure and inlarge his power, my Lord, is the first object of a minister of state. Then comes pecuniary advantages. Our present set of ministers may be honest, but they are certainly extremely poor. Charity begins at home; and this leads me to consider the last head of patronage.

To

To govern India by commissioners at home, is the declared principle of the new system ---I have known four different gentlemen in England, the declared agents of Nabobs and Zemindars, with full powers and handsome fallaries ; but they could do little or nothing for their constituents, because the directors did not renew leases of land lying in India, in Leadenhall Street.---If the Commissioners take that service on themselves, the streets of London may come to be crowded with the agents of the petty Princes from our Asiatic provinces, as Rome was formerly by swarms of solicitors of the same kind.---If I wished to shew my reading, I could quote some instances in point that have happened already.---Doctor E—— Burke, who has so kindly and so long watched over the constitution of the poor old East India Company, has more than once prescribed for the Rajah of Tanjour, and lately sent his cousin William again to feel the Rajah's pulse.---I hope he has been grateful ;

ful ;---but Doctor Burke's medicines are very productive of mischief---sometimes they cause phrenzy, and sometimes suicide. If the two doses, now prepared, are of his composition, and I suspect that they are, from his employing so strong a hand as that of the Secretary to compel us to take them, the Company will die of convulsions from the effects, and the nation cannot escape, but by the ruin of her constitution.----Renewing of leases for land, and agreeing for contracts in England, to be executed in India, at the expiration of the term for which the contracts now run, will open a wide field for speculation.---Disobedience of orders from home, by the executive officers abroad, was one of the strong reasons urged by the Secretary for the necessity of changing the constitution of the company---the matter is to be reversed, and the man who dares disobey the positive orders of the Commissioners, except in cases of extreme exigency, which may, in its consequences, involve the safety of
the

the state, is from that moment virtually recalled.---If, my lord, every post of profit, good farm, and beneficial contract in India, does not, in three years time, come to be chaffered for by every Jew broker in London,---then will our very poor statesmen be the most scrupulous ones the nation have ever enjoyed---for there is not a single act to check, or prevent, our virtuous ministers from disposing of all the above instant, annual, contingent, and lucrative patronage in any manner or way they please.

But, my lord, I have not yet opened the great floodgate of corruption. If you do not provide a remedy for it in time, it will overflow and ruin us for ever.---I shall but just mention it here, because the honourable Secretary did but just touch on it in his speech, the giving ample redress to the poor oppressed Indians.---It comes in so very questionable a shape, that I shall speak to it, as Hamlet did to his father's ghost, on its second
appear-

appearance ;---that is when I treat on the bills.

Restore expelled and injured Rajahs and Zemindars to their lands and estates, and rescue the honour of England from shame and disgrace in Asia.---Very fine words ! but they carry latent meanings, which, like serpents stings, will pierce deep and torture long.

If, on such plausible grounds, a commission is sent to India, I shall pity the feelings of the men who may compose it, if they are honest ;---and the poor native Indians, if they are knaves.---There is not a Rajah, or Zemindar, in India, who has an idea of Justice independent of power, or of court favour, but from purchase.---To General Smith, and Mr. Philip Francis, I refer you, my Lord, for the truth of what I am going to say.---If the restoration of Cheit Sing to the Zemindary of Benarras has been in contemplation, or is resolved on, he will know it four months before your officers

of government now there will ; and six months before your new ones can carry it into execution. Suppose him to have been innocent of all intention of raising the rebellion, and spilling the blood, for which he was expelled (which I shall die rather than admit) the first thing he will set about, will be to raise fifty or sixty lacks of rupees, amongst the rich Rajahs and great bankers at Alhiabad and Benaras,---and tender it in every mode and way to his friends, as he will call the men who will have that prodigious farce to play---they may refuse it, but that very refusal will raise his suspicions ; and as soon may you learn him to speak the Welch language, as to make him understand, that he has been restored to retrieve the honor of the English nation.---I say, thus will he act, supposing him to have been innocent, and so will he act though he was guilty.---The only Idea that will occupy his mind, and the mind of his courtiers, will be, that the party of Governor General Hastings, has been worsted at the English Durbar, and that
of

of Mr. Philip Francis prevailed.---And that is the only turn which the art of man can give to it, which an Asiatic can or will understand ; and accordingly, on the news of a change of system coming to Calcutta, every black and white politician of Mr. Francis's party, will congratulate the fugitive, and he will prepare to reward his friend.---If he shall be restored, it will not ease the Rajah's subjects : That the men who may be appointed to restore him, will not accept the presents ; for every farmer in his province will be cessed his proportion, and the sum which the Rajah may think it necessary to offer will be raised. Whether it will be accepted or not, is another matter. But such are the ideas, and such the political principles of all the great families in Hindostan, and you may as well attempt to make them change their nature, or what is yet more difficult, their religious opinions, as their political ideas.---Their creed is short and simple, and they suck it in with their milk, and never after renounce it. Power,

say they, is a little ivory box, which contains justice, and gold is the only key to it. If there is in England, a man who has resided a dozen years amongst the Hindoos, that has not the same sentiments with respect to their general stamp of political character, then am I a *Poggle*. How it has come to pass, that Mr. orator Burke has conversed so much with General Smith, Mr. Frances, and Mr. Broughton Rous, without fully understanding this strong trait in Asiatic character, I will not venture to guess? to me it appears, that the honourable gentleman cannot find by his researches, any honest men amongst his countrymen, who differ in opinion with him, or knaves amongst the Hindoos, of whose prejudices he seems to me to be mainly ignorant; yet, it is possible, I may live to be governed by laws conceived by that impatient mind, which I have seen intoxicated by passion; and in a fit of phrensy, little short of madness, assert, that Mr. Powel was honest, and Gov. Hastings a knave. Excuse the digression, my Lord, in treating of laws, it is impos-

impossible to keep the mind from resting a moment on law makers ; of the gentlemen here meant, I say with Calista's father—
 “ hadst thou been honest, thou hadst been a cherubim ; ” —but outrageous virtue, and prodigious knavery, are so nearly allied in human nature, that the names of Burke and Ryland, found in my ears equally detestable, when speaking of the East India Company ; for I know not in morals any difference between forgery and false comment, only, that the first, as touching property only, is, morally speaking, less pernicious than the last, where honest character is cruelly massacred by vile insinuation. Vide Ryland's case, and every page of the ninth report.

From the days of the Emperor, or Gr. Mogul Acbar, to the usurpation of the Nabob *Ally Verdie Caun*, the zimendiaries or great farms, in the provinces of Bengal, may be said to have been in some degree hereditary. Some exceptions there were before that time, and confiscations of very considerable estates took place, and of course
 landed

landed property changed hands ; but since the days of *Ally Verdie*, so innumerable and extraordinary have been the grants of old lands to new owners, that was a commission employed to give back the lands to the descendants of the old owners, perhaps there is not an estate in Bengal that would not be claimed by half a dozen pretenders. Such an idea is gone forth, my Lord, and if it is pursued, the most glorious opportunity will offer, to do justice, according to Asiatic ideas, of it, and fill the purses of the commissioners. One should imagine, from the above fair detail, that there is open and legal patronage enough to be acquired by the present plan to buy up *both the houses*, and fill needy statemens' pockets, if that alone was wanted.

I could recommend a set of commissioners, to execute this last branch of ministerial duty, restoring the ousted Zemindars, that in every respect would come up to Mr. Burke's idea of honest men ; Mr. Philip Francis, General Richard Smith,
 Mr.

Mr. Boughton Rous, Mr. Charles Goring, and Mr. James Grant---there are not five men in England, who have truer notions of Asiatic Justice ; or who have benefited more in the distribution of it.--Mr. Burke, in the last sessions of Parliament, warned the independent men, not to drive a virtuous administration to resort to corruption, in order to carry on the government. If the two new Asiatic Bills are not introductory to that system, I know not what is.--I have not, my Lord, strained a single point in the above deduction of Asiatic patronage now about to become ministerial, or crown influence. If my indignation at observing the base duplicity of certain orators hath induced me to treat with too much contempt the persons of men who have by pretended virtue forced themselves into stations high and honorable, the occasion must apologise for it.---We have no time to loose, for the day may be at hand, when a majority of Senators shall become too venal and powerful to be honest, and too sore to be told of it with safety.---I therefore take
the

the opportunity to say, that, any man who ever exclaimed against the too great influence of the crown, cannot, as an honest patriot, vote for transferring the patronage of the East India Company, to the King's Ministers, whether Whig or Tory, or one from that heterogeneous mass of all descriptions of men, the coalition.

I had determined, my Lord, to have accompanied the facts contained in these papers, with a few remarks on the bills---but the fury, with which they are likely to be driven through the lower house, will render it impossible; however, the remarks shall be drawn up; and if, as I hope, a virtuous stand shall be made in the House of Lords, to stop this desperate attempt to unhinge the Constitution, you shall hear again from

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most
obedient humble Servant,

*Duke's-Place,
25th. Nov. 1783.*

The AUTHOR.

N. B.

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Contracts, store keepers, pay-masters, &c. &c.		20

Votes 209

Ready Money

Restoration of Chiet Sing, 50 lacks, or ^{£.}500,000
 Replacing all the claimants to zemindaries
 in Bengal only, will be very moderately
 estimated at one year's rent of the lands 2,500,000

Millions of pounds sterling 3,000,000

H**Pretty**

Pretty picking in ready cash, and two hundred and nine new friends to the cause. If it does not turn out to be so, my Lord, then man must change his nature.---With this claw your Lordship may pretty nearly form an idea of the spirit which has always actuated the Select Committee.

P. S. I cannot refrain from remarking on one clause in this famous projected, or embryo act, it is entitled a bill for vesting the affairs of the East India Company in the hands of certain commissioners for the *benefit* of the proprietors and *the* publick.

Notwithstanding this, the proprietors, man, woman, and child, protest against the measure. They ask only for leave to use their own mercantile credit, and are willing to wait for their dividends, until

till their property, now ready provided and paid for abroad, shall arrive to relieve them. This is certainly reasonable, and the public at large seem determined to support them in their just claims, being themselves very averse to submit to be blistered, purged, and vomited by Doctor Burke's seven quacks and eight mountibanks; but the Doctor's intentions, will be best explained by a clause in the prescriptive bill.

“ And be it further enacted, by the
 “ authority aforesaid, that the said Com-
 “ missioners, or the majority thereof,
 “ shall have full power and authority to
 “ remove, displace, suspend, appoint,
 “ confine or restore, all and every person
 “ or persons whatsoever, civil or military,
 “ in the service of the said United Com-
 “ pany, or within the limits of the said
 “ United Company's charters, or any of
 “ them, or any way concerned in the
 “ management of their affairs, within this
 “ kingdom or in India; whether any such
 “ person

“ person or persons shall have been no-
 “ minated, or appointed, in and by any
 “ act or acts of parliament, or however
 “ otherwise nominated or appointed ; ex-
 “ cept as is herein provided and established,
 “ as to the appointment and removal of
 “ Commissioners themselves, and of the
 “ said assistant Directors.”

Have I, my Lord, supposed too much
 danger may follow from the bill now in
 hand? Had the famous mock patriot
 told us manfully, that Athens was so ruin-
 ed by the appointment of thirty commis-
 sioners, or Rome by ten, we might have
 drawn some comfort in our distress, from
 reflections, that our constitution was about
 to be destroyed by the same medicine,
 which destroyed the liberties of ancient
 Greece and Italy.---Instead of that, our
 modern Esculapius suffocates us with
 alusions to sick beds, hospitals, glister-
 pipes, poultices, and close-stool pans.

When

When, my good lord, will this driving nurse, be put into strait stays, and sent to St. Luke's, or into some alms house, amongsts other superannuated old women ?

FINIS.

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And overcome us like a Summer's cloud,
Without some special wonder? MACBETH.

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